

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Previously Presented) The ribboned array of polarization-maintaining fibers according to claim 21, wherein said ribbon portion is formed by fixing and coating said polarization-maintaining optical fibers with an adhesive, and aligning end faces of said polarization-maintaining optical fibers so as to have said predetermined plane of polarization.
3. (Previously Presented) The ribboned array of polarization-maintaining fibers according to claim 21, said ribbon portion further comprising positioning means for maintaining alignment of said polarization-maintaining optical fibers at said predetermined plane of polarization.
4. (Previously Presented) The ribboned array of polarization-maintaining fibers according to claim 3, wherein said positioning means is formed as a series of convex and concave shapes.
5. (Previously Presented) The ribboned array of polarization-maintaining fibers according to claim 4, wherein said convex and concave shapes are disposed at a regular pitch or discontinuously.
6. (Previously Presented) The ribboned array of polarization-maintaining fibers according to claim 5, wherein said convex and concave shapes are formed as a saw tooth shape or a curved wavy shape.

Claims 7-20 (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) A ribboned array of polarization-maintaining fibers, comprising:

a plurality of polarization-maintaining optical fibers, wherein a direction of the polarized wave of each of the plurality of polarization-maintaining optical fibers is rotated so as to be parallel to a predetermined plane of polarization; and

a cured ribbon portion having first and second lateral ends, having a length of 2 to 300 mm and surrounding at least some of the polarization-maintaining optical fibers, the polarization-maintaining optical fibers extending individually from the second lateral end of the ribbon portion,

wherein each of the polarization-maintaining optical fibers is rotated such that the polarized wave is parallel to the predetermined plane of polarization before the ribbon portion is cured, and

at least an external exposed surface of said ribbon portion comprises a material that is capable of being stripped to expose the polarization-maintaining optical fibers without damaging the polarization-maintaining optical fibers.

22. (Previously Presented) A ribboned array of polarization-maintaining fibers according to claim 21, wherein at least some of the polarization-maintaining optical fibers also extend from the first lateral end of the ribbon portion.

23. (Previously Presented) A ribboned array of polarization-maintaining fibers according to claim 21, wherein said cured ribbon portion is a cured adhesive.